



# ***A Grief Observed:***

## ***Study & Discussion Guide:***

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### **Introduction:**

**Prior to beginning this study, you will need to read A Grief Observed by C. S. Lewis originally published in 1963.**

C. S. Lewis was an educator, author, friend, and for a short time husband. This confirmed bachelor of nearly 58 years married Joy Davidman Gresham in March of 1957, and although she had been diagnosed with Cancer, they enjoyed each other's company and time together while it was in remission. However, in 1960 cancer returned and eventually took her life. This book *Grief Observed* is C. S. Lewis' chronicles of this personal observation and struggles as he watched the love of his life struggle in life and death, and his personal struggle coping with the loss.

This short work on grief helps us set the stage in our life for the coming losses, the questions, the feelings, the struggles, and the doubts. However, it also helps us come to grips with the pain, the thinking, and the loss. His writing helps us to think about how we will continue to function in life, until the day of peace and

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tranquility in heaven with our Savior Jesus Christ, whom C. S. Lewis so clearly looked forward to meeting.

## Question for Discussion and Thought:

- 1) C. S. Lewis' opening lines in "*The Grief Observed*" are so profound: "No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear. I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning. I keep on swallowing." As you read these opening lines, how did you relate it to your personal experience with grief or loss of a loved one or dear friend?
- 2) As you read C. S. Lewis' thoughts about the laziness of grief what are your thoughts, and how would you describe that experience in your personal life or someone near to you that has experienced grief?
- 3) C. S. Lewis asks the question "where is God?" and then proceeds to answer the question for himself. What are your thoughts and answers about where God is in your loss/grief?
- 4) C. S. Lewis discussed his struggle with going to places that his wife was happy and the inner struggle it created. What are your thoughts or inner struggle in respect to going to the places your loved one enjoyed? How do you cope with these thoughts?
- 5) C. S. Lewis states "It is hard to have patience with people who say, 'There is no death,' or 'Death doesn't matter.' As you think of these words what is your view of death? Does death matter to you? If so, how?
- 6) C.S. Lewis points out in chapter 2 that over time, the individual who you have lost becomes more and more imaginary. Do you agree with these thoughts? Can you combat or overcome this thinking? If so, would you and how?

- 7) C. S. Lewis talks about the time at a graveside or shrine in the house, by some as a replacement of the memory and time with the loved one, do you feel it is relevant to have that place to remember or is the memory of the heart sufficient?
- 8) C. S. Lewis talked about the raw deal that Lazarus received in dieing again after his being raised by the Lord at Bethany. He compares this to our desire to have the loved come back to be with us, and if we would wish them having to die again to serve our own selfish motives. Do you agree that it would be a selfish motive to have them back?
- 9) What is your perception of God as simply a road back to your loved one?
- 10) C. S. Lewis shared his beliefs in his personal relationship with Christ, and how that belief would allow him to face his own point of death and accept the death and separation from his wife. How do you view this relationship as a part of your eternal existence?